

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LISBON

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PRESS GUIDANCE ON PORTUGAL HAS BEEN APPROVED BY
THE SECRETARY AND FOLLOWING GUIDELINES SHOULD BE
USED.

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 63549 ACTION ASWAN 20 MARCH.

QUOTE

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TOSEC 837

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, PO

SUBJECT: ACTION MEMORANDUM: PRESS GUIDANCE ON PORTUGAL

----- S/S NO.7505532

REF.: TOSEC 726

FOR SECRETARY FROM SONNENFELDT

1. FOLLOWING PRESS GUIDANCE IS PROPOSED TO REFLECT
FIRMER U.S. POSITION ON EVENTS IN PORTUGAL.

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2. BASIC PUBLIC LINE INCLUDES THESE POINTS:

-- SINCE THE APRIL 25, 1974 REVOLUTION IN PORTUGAL
WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY WELCOMED THE STATED INTENTION OF
THE GOP TO HOLD FREE ELECTIONS IN PORTUGAL AND TO PROMOTE
THE EVOLUTION OF INSTITUTIONS OF GOVERNMENT REFLECTING
THE FREELY EXPRESSED WILL OF THE PORTUGUESE PEOPLE.
WE HAVE NOTED THE GOVERNMENT'S ANNOUNCED INTENTION
TO HOLD CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS IN APRIL.

-- WE REGRET ANY DEVELOPMENT, FROM WHATEVER QUARTER,
THAT IN ANY WAY SUBVERTS OR NEGATES THE PROSPECT
OF TRULY FREE ELECTIONS IN PORTUGAL.

-- THE U.S. HAD ABSOLUTELY NO INVOLVEMENT IN THE
ABORTIVE COUP OF MARCH 11.

-- AMB. CARLUCCI IS A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER WITH
A DISTINGUISHED RECORD WHO HAS THE COMPLETE SUPPORT
OF THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY. AMB. CARLUCCI
HAS NEVER SERVED WITH CIA, NOR HAS HE BEEN IN CHILE.
DURING THE FIVE YEARS BEFORE HIS PRESENT ASSIGNMENT,
MR. CARLUCCI SERVED IN SENIOR POSITIONS IN THE OFFICE
OF BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT AND SUBSEQUENTLY AS UNDER
SECRETARY OF HEW.

-- OUR SUPPORT FOR THE ORIGINAL OBJECTIVES OF THE
PORTUGUESE REVOLUTION HAS ALSO BEEN APPARENT IN OUR
ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

-- WE PRESCRIBE NO MODELS FOR PORTUGAL, BUT HOPE THE
PORTUGUESE WILL BE ABLE TO CHOOSE FOR THEMSELVES IN
AN ATMOSPHERE OF FREE CHOICE.

-- WHILE WE ARE AVOIDING ANY DEFINITIVE CONCLUSIONS
AT THIS TIME, WE ARE CONCERNED OVER THE ADVERSE IMPACT
THAT EVENTS IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE ABORTIVE COUP MAY
HAVE ON PROSPECTS FOR MODERATE FORCES IN PORTUGAL AND ON
THE REAL MEANING OF THE ELECTION PROCESS. THE MARCH 18
BANNING OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS (PDC) IS INDICATIVE OF
ACTIONS WHICH CAUSE US CONCERN.
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-- OUR INTEREST IN PORTUGAL REMAINS ONE OF ENCOURAGING THE
EVOLUTION OF MODERATE FORCES THAT WILL HELP ENSURE THE
PRESERVATION OF PORTUGAL'S CLOSE AND TRADITIONAL
ASSOCIATION WITH WESTERN EUROPE AND WITH ATLANTIC COMMUNITY
AS A WHOLE. WE CONTINUE STRONGLY TO VALUE OUR OWN
BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP.

-- WE WELCOME THE GOP'S ANNOUNCED INTENTION, IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE ABORTIVE COUP, TO HONOR ALL OF ITS INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS AND AGREEMENTS.

3. WE ARE SUPPLEMENTING THESE POINTS BY INDICATING, ON A SELECTIVE BACKGROUND BASIS THESE CONCERNS:

-- THAT THE CURRENT REVOLUTIONARY ATMOSPHERE HAS BEEN EXPLOITED BY THE RADICAL LEFT, BOTH WITHIN AND WITHOUT THE AFM, TO LABEL THE POPULAR DEMOCRATS AS WELL AS THE PDC AND THE CENTER SOCIAL DEMOCRATS (CDS) AS REACTIONARY ELEMENTS, THUS LEAVING THE SOCIALISTS AND WHAT WOULD REMAIN OF THE POPULAR DEMOCRATS EXPOSED ON THE RIGHT.

-- THAT THE COMPLETE OUSTER OF CIVILIANS FROM THE NEW AFM REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL FURTHER STRENGTHENS THE HAND OF THE RADICALS. (WE SHOULD AVOID, HOWEVER, USING THE TERM "LEFTIST DICTATORSHIP.")

-- THAT WE ARE INCREASINGLY CONCERNED OVER WHAT THIS TREND OF EVENTS, IF CONTINUED, COULD MEAN FOR GOP ACTIONS AFFECTING BOTH THE NATO CONNECTION AND OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP, INCLUDING THE AZORES.

-- THAT THE RAPID-FIRE NATIONALIZATION ACTIONS OF THE PAST SEVERAL DAYS HAVE FURTHER RADICALIZED THE ATMOSPHERE AND RUN THE RISK, IN THE SHORT RUN AT - LEAST, OF CRIPPLING THE ECONOMY AT A TIME WHEN IT IS ALREADY IN SERIOUS STRAITS. (THESE GOP ACTIONS, HOWEVER, HAVE IMMENSE POLITICAL APPEAL IN PORTUGAL AND WE SHOULD CAREFULLY AVOID OVERT CRITICISM.)

-- THAT WE NONETHELESS CONTINUE TO REGARD THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ELECTIONS

AS OF CRUCIAL SIGNIFICANCE, BECAUSE A REASONABLY STRONG SHOWING OF THE MODERATE FORCES IN SUCH AN ELECTION MIGHT IN TIME HAVE A MODERATING IMPACT ON THE AFM, WHICH NOW CLEARLY INTENDS TO REMAIN IN CONTROL OF THINGS.

-- THAT IN THIS SITUATION WE BELIEVE PORTUGAL'S WESTERN EUROPEAN ALLIES AND FRIENDS HAVE A SPECIAL ROLE TO PLAY IN COUNSELING MODERATION THROUGH THEIR OWN OFFICIAL AND POLITICAL ASSOCIATION AND CONTACTS WITH THE GOP AND POLITICAL GROUPS IN PORTUGAL.

4. RECOMMENDATION:

THAT YOU APPROVE THE PRESS GUIDANCE AS GIVEN ABOVE

APPROVE DISAPPROVE.

CLEARED BY: EUR - MR. LAINGEN AND S/PRS - MR. FUNSETH.
INGEYRSOLL UNQTE

IN LIGHT OF PRESENT SITUATION ANY COMMENTS YOU MIGHT
HAVE WOULD BE APPRECIATED. INGERSOLL

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